SOCIALISM.

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BY

ROSWELL D. HITCHCOCK, D.D.

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I.

SOCIALISM IN GENERAL.

THROUGHOUT Christendom a cloud has been gathering, and is gathering still, whose shadow falls upon the streets of every great city from St. Petersburg to San Francisco. Our civilization, whose present special type dates back now some four hundred years, in spite of all it has achieved and all it promises, has an under side to it of terrible menace; as, in ancient Athens, the Cave of the Furies was underneath the rock, on whose top sat the Court of the Areopagus. This under side of our civilization is inequality of social condition, keeping pace with the civilization; no new thing in history, but now commanding both scientific and popular attention as never before:—part of it sheer and simple dividend, more or less according to the invested capital of talent, industry, and thrift; part of it Providential visitation by sickness, or accident, or premature bereavement; part of it vicissi-

tude, inseparable from complicated interests; part of it inexorable retribution, according to the observance or infraction of moral laws; part of it, no doubt, wages unfairly restrained; but all of it blurred and hazy; misunderstood by the careless masses who have everything at stake; and misrepresented by the hideous fraternity of conspirators who have nothing at stake, and are bent on mischief. I am no pessimist. It is not ruin that I see ahead, but trouble, which can not be too promptly met. The Communism of our day is a real Cave of the Furies.

The terms Communism and Socialism are much used interchangeably; but they are not synonymous. Communism is related to Socialism as species to genus. All Communists are Socialists; but not all Socialists are Communists. For example, in Germany, where Socialism, repeating in this respect the history of the old Rationalism in theology, is a recent and rank exotic, it is decidedly, even fiercely, Communistic; while in France, where it is indigenous and finer, it has come to be decidedly and soberly Anti-communistic. These two kinds of Socialism are not to be

confounded. Nor yet may we disregard the relationship between them. The trunks are two; the root is one.

I shall therefore speak first of Socialism in general; or, rather, of the problem it undertakes to solve.

"The poor ye have with you always," is both historic and prophetic. Inequality of social condition is a permanent fact in political economy; variable only in degree. If, by some heroic treatment, it could be got rid of to-day, it would return to-morrow. Readjustment would be necessary every few years; every year, might be better still. The causes of this inequality, most of them, are likewise permanent. Mankind are not equal in endowment. In stamina of constitution, one is strong, and another weak. Brains are larger or smaller, coarser or finer. Natural appetites and passions are more or less overbearing and vehement. The will is here a master, and there a slave. It is not merely that there are different grades of work to be done, which call for graded remuneration, but, in the same grade, one will surpass another. One man

just manages to keep soul and body together, barely making the ends of the year meet. Another man, whose chances are no better, comes out with a surplus. He may, or he may not, have *earned* more, but, being more provident and self-denying, he has *saved* more. This surplus is capital; and if every man had saved, labor and capital would never clash.

All this is exclusive of sickness and accident, which, if the sickness be brief, or the accident not disabling, the patient himself may have provided for in advance; but if the sickness be protracted or hopeless, and the accident be crippling, society may have to be taxed for the deficit, and the inequality may become chronic and burdensome. Exclusive also of those distressing casualties which frequently plunge whole families into sudden and helpless poverty by striking down the husbands and fathers, whose daily labor brought them their daily bread.

There is also the liability to commercial disaster; a liability that begins with commerce itself; and commerce begins with capital; and capital, as we have said, is surplus. Many of

these reverses are only tidal and transient. But some are final. To the young man, bankruptcy may be only a fall on the ice; in a moment he is up again. The old man, ten to one, goes through and under. It has been said, that in the United States only five traders in a hundred never fail.* In older countries, the failures are fewer.

But the greatest inequality is that which comes of immoralities; the chiefest of which are willful indolence, intemperance, and licentiousness. In their coarser forms these three vices give us by far the greater part of all our paupers and outcasts. The fashionable vices, as they are called, do not provoke immediate expulsion from society; but, by and by, the moral lepers will be found outside the lepers' gate. Audacity in stealing may threaten us every now and then with a new plutocracy, more vulgar and flaunting than its predecessor; but, after all, there is an inner side to the iron bars.

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* Horace Wright, before the Hewitt Committee in New York, May 23, 1878, testified that during the last four years 37,000 firms out of 680,000 had failed.

The inequality of condition thus indicated, was unquestionably greater in the ancient than it is in the modern world. Our Christian civilization has certainly surpassed the Classic. But now in Christendom itself, although slavery has been abolished, the inequality is greater than it was four hundred years ago, greater than it was one hundred years ago. Socialistic writers say the inequality is still increasing. But France certainly is better off than she was fifty years ago, and England is better off than she was twenty-five years ago. And so perhaps it would be safe to say, that the tide has turned; that the inequality is now diminishing. But the times are critical. Our civilization is sharply challenged. Passion, science, conscience are all aroused. Under these new lights, it is as if the inequality were but just discovered. It maddens like a new wrong. The Furies are not asleep in their Cave.

Our present civilization, nominally Christian, is nevertheless distinctively and intensely materialistic. Its special task has been the

subjugation of nature. It can not be called exclusively Protestant, but, along with Protestantism, whose handmaid it has always been, it was cradled amidst inventions and discoveries which have changed the very channels of history. Printing with movable types, Gunpowder for the battlefield, the Mariner's Compass, the Passage round Good Hope, the Discovery of new Continents, were the signs and wonders of the new epoch. By new applications of science, by new sciences, both land and sea are considerably more productive than they were. These products are wrought up into endless varieties of form, both for use and for ornament. And commerce, which began on the Persian Gulf, has now all oceans for its own.

The result is great wealth, rapidly accumulated, with an inequality in the distribution of it which can not be wholly justified; an inequality which only began not very long ago to be redressed: in France, by the Revolution of 1789, and the Code Napoleon; in England, about twenty-five years ago; in Germany, and most other European coun-

tries, not yet. Here in the United States, the inequality to be redressed has never equalled that in Europe. As a fair representative of our present civilization, take England, all things considered, the first nation in Europe: her industry the most diversified, her wealth the greatest, her will the stoutest. In the fifteenth century she was quoted throughout Europe for the number of her land-owners and the comfort of her people.* In 1873 about 10,000 persons owned two-thirds of the whole of England and Wales. In Scotland, it is still worse, half the land being owned, it is said, by ten or twelve persons. Over against this growing wealth and dwindling number of proprietors, stands the ragged army of paupers, of which England is ashamed.† The continental contrasts are not so startling; France, indeed, is quite the other way, with her 5,000,000 of land-owners. But taking Europe as a whole, and comparing the prices

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* Chancellor Fortescue, cited by Laveleye, "Primitive Property," p. 263.

† In 1871, 900,000; in 1878, 726,000.

of labor with the cost of living—food, clothing, and shelter, it can be proved that the average European peasant of the fourteenth century, as also of the fifteenth, was better off relatively than the average European peasant of the nineteenth century.* As Froude has said, the upper classes have more luxuries, and the lower classes more liberty; while in regard to the substantial comforts of life, they are farther apart now than they were then. And the greater the wealth of the nation as a whole, the greater the inequality between its upper and its lower classes.

This is due largely to the extraordinary advances made in manufacturing and commerce, which have reacted even upon agriculture, revolutionizing also its methods. Everywhere now machinery carries the day. Inventors

* In England, for example, when the wages of a common farm hand were fourpence a day, a penny went as far as a shilling goes now. At this rate, the common laborer should now be getting four shillings a day, whereas in fact he is getting only about two. Mechanics' wages, owing to the Trade Unions, are a trifle higher relatively than they were then. In Germany, the highest price paid farm hands anywhere is 56 cents a day; on the lower Rhine, the price paid is 31 cents; in Silesia, only 18 cents.

are the potentates, replacing the Alexanders, the Cæsars, the Ghengis Khans, the Napoleons of the past. Look at the mowing-machine, sweeping across the hay-field like a charge of cavalry; but anybody can learn to manage it who has wit enough to whet and swing a scythe. In one of our cotton mills I saw a machine, called the Warper, which, from 358 spools, was taking the 358 threads required for the warp of a web of cloth, and was winding them upon a drum or cylinder for the loom. When a thread broke, the machine instantly stopped, to have the ends tied. A child was tending the machine. Which was master, the child or the machine? And which was servant, the machine or the child? Our best pocket chronometers, that used to be called by the names of their famous makers, Patek, Jürgens, Frodsham, now bear the name of the Massachusetts village whose factory turns them out by the hundred, as some other factory turns out its wooden pails. Our machinery is marvelous. Already some of it talks. If only it could be made to think, very little would be left for

brains to do, except, possibly, to invent a new machine occasionally. Some of this machinery certainly requires very careful handling, but much of it may be handled by almost anybody. The very design of it is not merely to cheapen and stimulate production, but also to supplement the scarcity of skilled labor. And so, apparently, its tendency has been to lower the average of artisan ability. It not only permits, but encourages the employment of women and children, who ought rather to be at home, or in school. Machinery thus gets the better of manhood. Our civilization becomes a pyramid, whose base is broad and crushing. Steam drives the machinery; coal generates steam; and men go down for coal with something of the risk of regiments going into battle. About the year 1350, coal, which had been discovered some fifty years before, on the banks of the Tyne, began to be used for fuel in London.* Now the coal mines of England, be-

* In 1373 its use was forbidden by proclamation on account of its effluvia, supposed to be unhealthy. But about 1400 the consumption of it was extended.

sides all the semi-barbarism they breed, are costing her, by accidents of one sort and another, more than a thousand human lives a year. In the old classic Levant, every sailor was on deck, with a chance to be schooled by sea, and sky, and star, and storm, into the higher grades of service. Now we steam round the globe in huge leviathans, at the mercy of grimy firemen out of sight, deep down where day and night, calm and storm, summer and winter, are all the same.

On the whole, unhealthful employments appear to multiply with the advancing arts. More and more men take their lives in their hands for their daily bread. Brave soldiers, you tell me, do the same. Only mercenaries, I reply, do that; and war, no matter how righteous it may be, is always terribly demoralizing. Say what you will, things are not just as they should be when a man is forced into some loathsome and hazardous employment because there is nothing else for him to do; and then is so exiled and humbled by it, that his children after him shall be almost hopelessly foredoomed to the same em-

ployment. Even in armies, where authority is absolute, and obedience must be implicit, volunteers are generally called for in forlorn assaults, partly, to be sure, that only the very best may go, but also because it is considered simply fair that men should have always every possible liberty of choice when their own lives are at stake. Pensions likewise await the widows and orphans of them that fall. Ancient nations made unhealthful employments a part of their penal discipline. Forfeited life gained something by being sent "to the mines."

Another incidental evil, of considerable magnitude, is the liability to over-production, or, as some prefer to say, disproportionate production, which is over-production in some directions; the very calamity, or one of the calamities, upon us now. Plethora begets paralysis. Hounded on by the hum of our own machinery, we manufacture more than is wanted. Mills stop, and workmen, narrowed, dulled, dwarfed, almost crippled by our system of labor, are flung out helpless upon the street. They can not dig, to beg they are

ashamed. They ask only for work; but, till consumption catches up again with production, there is no more work to be had.

In Europe another characteristic infelicity of our present civilization, is the supposed necessity of maintaining large standing armies. The old Roman Empire, holding the better part of Europe, and portions of Asia and Africa, with a population of a hundred millions, half freemen, half slaves, had a regular army of 175,000 men. Of auxiliaries, furnished by the provinces, there were about as many more; with some 75,000 naval troops. So that the whole military strength of the Empire was a little more than 400,000. Now, instead of that one Empire, there are five or six powerful kingdoms, several of which are stronger in arms than Rome was. For example, France and Germany, having each a population of about 40,000,000, have each a regular army of nearly 500,000 men. The heart of Europe is one vast military encampment. Millions of men are under arms all the time; consuming without producing; in-

capacitated for any other employment.* The waste is enormous. And in Germany especially, where the discipline is sternest, Socialism waxes fiercer and fiercer year by year. The cry is, "Disarm." But no nation dares disarm alone; and they can not agree to disarm together. To such a pass has our civilization come in about four hundred years, since Charles VII., in France, organized for himself the first standing army of 22,000 archers and 900 horsemen; just about the size of our United States army, which answers our purpose, only because the Atlantic Ocean rolls between us and the politics of Europe.

This inequality of social condition, thus far increased, rather than diminished, by our advancing civilization, is very painful to think of. One has no need to be a Christian, to be grieved by it. It offends the most rudimental sense of human brotherhood. How has it come about that children of the same family

* See "The Armies of Asia and Europe," by Emory Upton: 1878.

are so far apart in their fortunes? And what can be done, not to bridge, but to narrow, and, if possible, annihilate, the chasm between them? These are the two cardinal Socialistic questions of our day, and of all days. The former suggests what may be called the diagnosis, the latter what may be called the therapeutics of Socialism.

Socialism, in this sense of the word, is not a bad thing. It seems very much like philanthropy, but they differ. Philanthropy concerns itself about the whole nature, condition, and destiny of man, for time and for eterity. Socialism concerns itself about the outward environment, and ends with time. Socialism claims to be more realistic than philanthropy; it is, in fact, more likely to be sentimental. Pronounced and professional Socialism easily becomes a cant and a quackery. Dealing so exclusively with outward problems, it prescribes for the symptoms and misses the disease. It may not go so far as to say, that the individual is for society, rather than society for the individual; men for institutions, rather than institutions for men. But

it does overrate society and underrate the individual; it does overrate institutions and underrate men. And so it dreams of regenerating society, without regenerating the individual; or, at all events, it insists upon regenerating society first.

II.

COMMUNISTIC SOCIALISM.

This leads me to consider the Communistic Socialism.

To-day there is not in our language, nor in any language, a more hateful word than Communism. In Paris seven years ago, in Pittsburg last year, in Berlin this year, it meant, and still it means, wages without work, arson, assassination, anarchy. In this shape of it, the instant duty of society, without taking a second breath, is to smite it with the swiftness and fury of lightning. Incorrigible tramps, packing and prowling round together, demanding the best from door to door, camping in farmers' barns, smashing farmers' machines, insulting decent men, and terrifying women and children, on public roads, should not expect to be reasoned with. Mad wretches, whose hands smoke with blood, can not be

put out of the way too soon, nor too far. The preachers of this satanic crusade against capital are not, of course, to be silenced where free speech has a genealogy running so much farther back than our separate existence as a nation; a freedom which is not of Moses, but of the fathers. This planting of dragons' teeth is not, I suppose, to be stopped. But wild mobs, wrecking railway trains, and sacking our cities, are a kind of crop which can not be mowed down too close.

Even such barbarities must not provoke us to be despisers of history. Communism, in its essential genius, is not new, is not contemptible, is not abominable. It is a tradition, a philosophy, a gospel. As related to the tenure of landed property, it is one of the oldest traditions of the race. As a philosophy, it deals with those social and civil problems, in regard to which mankind have been always the most divided, and the most at fault. Its gospel, to be sure, has no God in it, only humanity—the fraternity of the fatherless; but it preaches social regeneration, and promises a millennium.

It is a point of very considerable interest historically, that Practical Communism should have preceded Speculative Communism by so long an interval. The origin of property is confessedly obscure, like most other origins. Hypothesis therefore takes the place of historic certainty. And opinions have widely differed; for example, as to whether property in land came first, or property in the products of land; and in regard to landed property, which kind of ownership came first, separate or joint, individual or communal. With respect to this latter point, the generally accepted theory used to be, that individual property was the earlier, and communal property the later form. The more advanced historico-political science of our day has challenged this theory, and reversed the order. The literature of the subject is very learned and able, as well as abundant. This particular question of the relative antiquity of individual and communal property in land belongs especially to three writers of great breadth and penetration, Sir Henry Maine in England, Maurer in Germany, and Laveleye

in France.* Of different tendencies, predisposing them to different applications and uses of the principle involved, these three eminent writers are agreed in the conclusion, after independent and great research, that common property in land was, in many parts of the world, perhaps everywhere, undoubtedly the original form of ownership.

This antiquity of Communism, almost newly discovered, certainly never before seen in such a light as now, is evidently doing a great deal to strengthen the argument for it, even with people who have not been in the habit of caring much for historic precedents. Communism, once treated with scorn as a raw and recent heresy, now claims for itself the honors of age. The ancient Dalmatians, according to Strabo (vii. 5, 5), divided their acres every seven years; the Vaccaei in Spain, according to Diodorus Siculus (v. 34), every year. The

*Sir Henry Maine, first in his lectures at the Middle Temple (1854–62), afterward in his "Ancient Law" (1861), and "Village Communities" (1871); Maurer, in his "Einleitung zur Geschichte der Mark-Hof-Dorf-und Stadt Verfassung" (1854), and "Mark Verfassung" (1856); and Laveleye in his "De la Propriete et de ses Formes Primitives" (1874), translated into English by Marriott (1878).

ancient Germans, according both to Cæsar (*B. G.* iv. 1), and to Tacitus (*Germ.* § 26), were Communists. So, also, in Russia, in India, in the island of Java, in Mexico, and in other countries, traces are found of the old joint tenure of land.* Christian people are reminded of the Agrarianism of the Mosaic legislation, the general basis of which was tribal, with a provision for bringing back, every fiftieth year, every acre of the land, except what belted the Levitical cities, to some representative of its original proprietor. Still more account is made of the pentecostal Communism of the Apostolic Church. It is idle to deny it, as some have done. The Apostolic Communism, to be sure, was not obligatory and absolute, but voluntary, and might be partial; still it was Communism.

This argument from antiquity — heathen, Hebrew, Christian, is not to be brushed away by a breath. We must be able to show that the earliest and oldest things are only sometimes, not always, the best. Blossoms are not better than fruit. The human

*See Woolsey's "Political Science," § 25.

race must have had an infancy; not as I suppose of barbarism, but of crude capacity awaiting development. Ideas and institutions of every kind—religious, moral, political, must have grown; but especially political ideas and institutions, as pertaining more to what is outward, mutable, and transient. On no other ground can we defend the Patriarchal and Jewish economies.

Communism, we may say then, is not exactly barbarous, though frequently found amongst barbarians, but infantile. It was admirably suited to the Hebrews—a people of nomadic parentage, who were to be held back from commerce that they might be held back also from heathen contamination. And yet, for some reason or reasons, the Mosaic jubilee arrangement was so poorly observed, that Michaelis doubts whether it was ever observed at all. Ewald thinks that after having declined, the observance of it was revived by Josiah. On the whole, the Agrarian idea appears never to have been very fully realized. As for Christian Jerusalem, it was evidently an exceptional city in the Apostolic age. Men

were gathered there out of all countries. Their new faith as Christians practically outlawed them. They were poor—very poor; distressed, a great many of them. Some were well off. It occurred to them to try the experiment of a partial Communism. Whether it was proposed, or only consented to, by the Apostles, does not appear. It is certainly not recommended in any Apostolic Epistle. Furthermore, the Jerusalem Church was always poor, always an object of charity to other Churches; and the Communistic experiment was not tried anywhere else.

Later on, in the fourth century, the Monastic Communism makes its appearance. It was a good thing for Europe in the perilous infancy of its institutions; a good thing down even to the time of Charlemagne—since then, a bad thing.

Shakerism, of British parentage, but now almost exclusively American, is a curious compound of religious enthusiasm and of worldly thrift. Strictly Communistic with respect to property, and rejecting the family life, it grows slowly when it grows at all, by ex-

ternal accretion; and is so sincere, so inoffensive, so industrious and frugal, but also so entirely exceptional and so insignificant numerically (less than 2,500 in 1874), that no reason can be given why it should die very soon. Indeed, it appears to have been gaining in numbers during the last few years of commercial depression.

Mormonism is a great national humiliation, which we must have deserved, or we should not have had it. But it is very far from being exclusively, or even predominantly, American. It takes the bad blood of all Europe to keep it agoing. It is a vile, polygamous Communism, which, we hope, may not be too long in dying.

Of other Communistic Societies in the United States, numbering in all about 2,500 persons, in fourteen settlements, one is French, two are American, and the rest mostly German. Only two of them, the American Societies at Oneida and Wallingford, practice community of wives and children. The Rappists, or Harmonists, near Pittsburg, numbering 110, and dwindling,

are celibates like the Shakers. All the others maintain the ordinary family life. All, except the Icarians in Iowa, originally founded by Cabet, now numbering only sixty-five persons in eleven families, have a religious basis. Most of them are mainly agricultural in their industry, and all are prosperous; but the prosperity is that of peasants. Life has little variety, or breadth, or uplift. Nobody supposes that such Communism can ever become general.*

Antiquity certainly lends a charm to this Practical Communism. We look back upon it with an interest akin to that which is felt in looking at the plows, hand-mills, and looms still to be seen in the Orient. Its antiquity, however, is more against it than for it. The real age of gold is not behind us with heathen poets, but before us with Hebrew prophets; and the resort to Communism, now so fervently urged upon us, would be a retrogression, not indeed to, but certainly towards barbarism.

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* See "The Communistic Societies of the United States." By Charles Nordhoff. New York: 1875.

Speculative Communism has a brilliant history. It begins about six hundred years before Christ with Phaleas of Chalcedon, whom Milton speaks of as the first to recommend the equalization of property in land.

Plato favors Communism. In the fifth book of the "Republic," Socrates is made to advocate, not merely community of goods, but also community of wives and children. This was no after-dinner debauch in the groves of the Academy, as Milton too severely suggests.* It was a logical conclusion from a mistaken premise. The individual was to be absorbed in the organism. The ideal aimed at, was the unity of the State, whose pattern appears to have been partly Pythagorean, and partly Spartan. In regard to property, the formulated purpose was, not to abolish wealth, but to abolish poverty. In the "Laws" (v. 13), Plato would allow to the richest citizen four times as much income as to the poorest. In regard to women, the aim was not sensual indulgence, but the propagation and rearing of the fittest offspring. This community of

* "Areopagitica," Milton's Prose Works, ii. 71, 72.

wives and children was for the ruling class only; not for the husbandmen, nor for the artificers. So also, probably, the community of goods. We say probably, for the scheme is not wrought out in all its details, and Plato himself had no hope of seeing his dream realized till kings are philosophers, or philosophers are kings.

The echoes of this Platonic speculation have been loud and long. About the year 316 B.C., Evemerus, sent eastward by Cassander, King of Macedon, on a voyage of scientific discovery, reports in his "Sacred History"* the finding of an island, which he calls *Panchaia*, the seat of a Republic, whose citizens were divided into the three classes of Priests, Husbandmen, and Soldiers; where all property was common; and all were happy.

In 1516 Sir Thomas More published his "Utopia;" evidently of Platonic inspiration. More also chose an island for his political and social Paradise. He had Crete in mind. His island, crescent-shaped, and 200 miles wide

* Reported by Diodorus Siculus, Hist. v. 42–46.

at the widest point, contained 54 cities. It had community of goods, but not of women.

The "Civitas Solis" of Campanella, published in 1623, was in imitation perhaps of More's "Utopia." This City of the Sun stood on a mountain in Ceylon, under the equator, and had a community both of goods and of women.

About the same time Lord Bacon amused himself by writing the "New Atlantis," a mere fragment, the porch of a building that was never finished.

In the great ferment of Cromwell's time the "Oceana" of Harrington appeared (1656); a book famous in its day, with high traditional repute ever since, but now seldom read except by the very few who feel themselves called upon to master the literature of the subject. Hallam pronounces it a dull, pedantic book; and nobody disputes the verdict. Harrington advocates a division of land, no one to have more than two thousand pounds' (ten thousand dollars') worth. The upshot of it all would be, a moderate aristocracy of the middle classes.

Such books belong to a class by themselves, which may be called Poetico-Political; æsthetic, scholarly, humane, and hopeful. They are not addressed to the masses. If they make revolutions, it is only in the long run. They are not battles, nor half battles, but only the bright wild dreams of tired soldiers in the pauses of battles.

Communistic books with iron in them—Marcian's iron for Attila, are not modern only, but recent. Modern Communism, now grown so surly and savage everywhere, began mildly enough. As a system, it is mostly French, name and all. The famous writers are Saint-Simon, Fourier, Considérant, Proudhon, Cabet, and Louis Blanc. The earlier apostles, Saint-Simon, who died five years before, and Fourier, who died seven years after, the Revolution of 1830, which they did so much indirectly to bring about, had for their disciples the aristocratic youth of France. Considérant, whose "Destinée Sociale" appeared between 1834 and 1844, followed in the same path. These men were philosophers of the dreamy sort, reconstructing so-

ciety, as the walls of Troy were built, with strains of Olympian music. Their whole tone was serenely Academic. They appealed only to what is most generous in human sentiment.

In Cabet's "Voyage en Icarie" (1842), and still more in Louis Blanc's "L'Organization du travail" (1840), we begin to hear the ring of steel forging into something sharper than trowels. In 1840 Proudhon tells France, and tells Europe, that "*Property is Robbery.*" More pestilent words were never spoken. In 1848 this short sentence was the dagger that stabbed the Republic of Lamartine. The man on horseback soon hove in sight. The New Empire rode in, bringing with it the prosperity that comes of order, the burdens that come of glory. Then followed championship of the Latin races, the Mexican Protectorate, the Suez pageant, wicked war with Germany, and terrible Sedan. France went mad. The wild Marseillaise rang out, the Commune stamped its angry foot, evil spirits answered the call, and the streets of Paris were hot and red with flames and blood, as

never before, and probably never to be again. So perished Communism in France.

Perished, I say, in France; but not in Europe, nor in America. In Russia, less than twenty years ago, it began, as it did in France, with scholars and students, invading and infecting the Universities.* Now it poisons the blood, and maddens the brains, of artisans and peasants. Self-christened, Nihilism describes it well; its ambition is not to re-construct, but simply to destroy.

German Communism is hardly of age yet, but old for its years. Its recent growth has been rapid, antagonizing the rapid development of the new German Empire, whose "Blood and Iron" (*Blut und Eisen*) it detests, denounces, and defies. Like almost everything else German, Bismarck and his Empire of course excepted, it is eminently scholastic. It wears glasses, studies history, idolizes science, and, whether it builds or fights, always observes the rules. Its chief apostles have been Ferdinand Lasalle and

* The term "Nihilist" was first used in 1862 by Tourganieff in his novel, "Peres et Enfans."

Karl Marx. Lasalle was only thirty-eight years of age when he fell in a duel in 1864, barely two years after becoming an acknowledged leader. Marx is still living, an exile in London. Lasalle, an author of books, but better known, and more effective, as a prolific and brilliant pamphleteer, was comparatively moderate and patriotic, leading the right wing of German Communism. The left wing followed Marx, till, in 1875, the right wing went over to his side, and he has since commanded the whole army. From his cottage in London, he keeps his glass upon the field, and directs every movement. His voluminous work "On Capital" shows us what he is, and what he wants. He cares no more for Germany than he cares for Greece or Egypt. He loudly proclaims his allegiance only to labor, though living himself, as Lasalle did, in luxury. Private capital must be abolished, all industries adopted, organized, and managed by the State, money advanced by the State to individuals as may be needed in the development of new enterprises, wages largely increased, family life reconstructed, and God

dethroned. Such is German Communism, lumbering pedantic volumes, condensed in countless pamphlets, inculcated by more than forty journals, sustained, in 1877, by nearly half a million of voters out of five millions and a half, as yet only every eleventh voter, but represented in Parliament by a steadily-growing party, that may soon hold the balance of power.* It blundered when it fired once and again at the brave old Emperor.

In America we are getting the refugees: Frenchmen, disgusted that Paris proposes no more barricades; Germans, willing to endure less science, if they may only find more safety; not much like those English refugees, so long ago, who said their prayers, and sang their hymns, on "the wild New England shore." These new fugitives, too many of them, fly hunted by justice, or to forestall the hunt. In ordinary times, their bad breath would be lost in the fresh breezes of the Continent. Just now they speak to ears that listen for idle

* In the recent election, the number of Socialistic members, which had been steadily increasing, was cut down from twelve to nine.

hands, to hearts that are aching at the cry of hungry mouths at home. Our Roman Catholic Irish workingmen, as hard pressed as any of us, are behaving much better than might have been expected; partly, no doubt, because our institutions are schooling them, and partly because they have more common sense of their own than they had the credit of, but also, and largely, because their Church has denounced the agitators. Of strictly indigenous Communism, there is very little among us; and there would have been still less, but for the unparalleled industrial paralysis of the last five years. It is out of place here; it suits neither our blood nor our geography. The Teutonic instinct of individualism, which, with other things, may be relied upon to carry Germany safely through the impending crisis in her history, belongs also to us as an essentially Teutonic people, and, with other things, one of which is an immense reserve of cheap, good land, may be relied upon to save us also from the crushing despotism of this new Social Democracy.

How Russia shall deal with her Commun

ism, is a Russian question. How Germany shall deal with hers, is a German question. How we shall deal with ours, is our question, which may have to be answered sooner, and answered more sharply, than perhaps we think.

Red-handed Communism would stand no chance at all here. We have in the United States nearly 3,000,000 of land-owners, firmly grasping the continent.* They will not be robbed of their acres. They are not to be frightened into hiring men whose services they do not need. Other shots may yet be heard round the world, besides those fired by Massachusetts farmers at Concord bridge, shots fired, next time, in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, or Illinois. I will risk our farmers. No French engineering could barricade a prairie; no German bullets shoot off the nation's head.

One thing greatly needed now and always, is less fear of ruffians. Have you never ob-

* The United States Census for 1870 gives 2,659,985 farms, averaging 153 acres. In 1860 the average size was 199, and n 1850, 203 acres.

served how often burglars get the worst of it in a struggle, with every advantage on their side except the courage that goes with a good conscience? The brutal mob, which some of us saw surging down Broadway, in the summer of 1863, flushed from the sacking of the Colored Orphan Asylum on Fifth Avenue, was swept from the pavement in less than ten minutes by a squad of resolute policemen, using only their clubs. The German army at Austerlitz had muscle enough; at Sedan it had brain enough. But institutions that are not subverted, may yet be rudely shaken, or radically changed. In the last analysis it will be found that Cæsar was Rome's escape from Communism. The rich were being plundered by the poor; they lifted up their voices in wild alarm, and the avenging eagles hastened across the Rubicon. History may easily be persuaded to repeat her retributions. Communism is in the air. Section is poisoned against section, class against class, interest against interest. The poorer West and South are incited to despoil the richer East. Farmer, manufacturer, and merchant, natural

friends, are being told that they are natural enemies. Long-continued commercial distress, instead of being recognized as a common calamity, in Europe as well as here, with special reasons for it in our own case, growing out of the war that saved the Union, is fiercely denounced as the crime of a class. Men, or the representatives of men that loaned their money to the Government, to carry on the war that saved it, money loaned in patriotic faith, on condition it should not be taxed, such men are stigmatized as "bloated bondholders." The outcry is infamous. No matter what the amount may be, one billion or two billions. No matter where the bonds now are, here or in Europe. No matter in whose hands they are, though Shylock should hold them all. The bonds speak for themselves; they went for the saving of the nation's life. The thought of taxing them, with exemption from taxation written as it were in blood across their face, is a dishonest thought, basely dishonest. "Bloated bondholders!" Demagogues are supposed to know what they are about. Nicknames just now are only cheap

substitutes for arguments; but, by and by, they mean brickbats, and paving-stones, and torches, and firebrands, when the mob, which the atmosphere of great cities always holds in solution, begins to blacken the pavement. The situation is a grave one. It is no procession of peaceful industries that I see marching now. Labor and Capital, from opposing camps, are moving on towards one another; to meet, I hope and believe, as Esau and Jacob met amongst the mountains of Gilead, to be reconciled; but, it may be, to meet as Pompey and Cæsar met at Pharsalia. I confess I expect no Cæsar. I find on our map no Rubicon. But then I expect to see this Communistic madness rebuked and ended. If not rebuked and ended, I shall have to say, as many a sad-eyed Roman must have said, nineteen hundred years ago, *I prefer Civilization to the Republic.*

I have said that Communism is in the air. What is Communism? There is no mystery about it. It is simply the absorption of the individual in the community, the citizen in the State. The individual as such has no rights;

the community has absorbed them all. What the community ordains, must be done, or endured. Not relations only, but employments, everything, must be determined by the State. Not only must everybody work, but everybody must do just the kind, and just the amount, of work the community shall set him to do. In short, the State undertakes to do everything, or almost everything, which individuals and corporations now do. The State owns all the lands, and all the houses; all the railways, factories, and banks; and all the vessels. There is no more any private property or private business. No one shall even braid for himself a palm-leaf hat, or cobble his own shoes. If it be answered, that no one will wish to do any such thing for himself, having no occasion to do it, it follows, that present motives to industry and economy will have ceased to operate. The inability to better one's condition will have extinguished the desire to do it. The right to do it will be no longer debatable. All freedom has perished. The citizen is nothing, the State is all; and, in a Republic, that all may be

barely a majority of one, and that one carried drunk to the polls. One drunken voter may thus be master of us all. It is a monstrous doctrine. But we have got something more to do than howl it down. It is a philosophy, and has got to be argued down.

First of all, we should make it clear to ourselves, and so be prepared to make it plain to others, that the State is for the citizen, not the citizen for the State; society for the individual, not the individual for society. The greatest of teachers has said, that even God's Sabbath was made for man; not merely to serve him as he is, but to make him still more of a man. Institutions are mortal; men immortal. The historical, temporal Judgment is of institutions and organisms. The final Judgment is of individuals, each one of us all giving account of *himself* to God. Personality is august. Consciously responsible to moral law, we must have perfect freedom, in order to be up to the responsibility. And so the humblest of us has rights, which all the rest of us, banded together, may not dare to touch. I have a right to my life; and society, without

my consent, shall not take it away, till it has been forfeited by crime. I have a right to my liberty; and society shall not enslave me. I have a right to my property, whether earned or inherited; and society shall not use it, against my wishes, without appraisal and indemnity. The final end of society is not itself, but the individual. What will Germany be good for, when a plain, godly peasant like Hans Luther of Eisleben is no longer possible? What shall we be good for, when Paine's "Age of Reason" has supplanted Butler's "Analogy?" Society, of course, has its sphere, its prerogatives, its authority. It may command me to assist the policeman in arresting a murderer. It may send me into battle. Society is under bonds to defend us all, in defending itself; and I am a party to the contract. Society may build its roads and bridges; but when it crosses my meadow, or hurts my business, it must settle with me for the damage. Not to do it, is Communism. Society may abate nuisances; but it may not undertake the organization of labor or exchange. It may not tell me what I shall do

for a living. That society would only ruin our industries in adopting and trying to manage them, is almost demonstrable. Practical business men, who are succeeding in business, pronounce it a very foolish scheme, which has always miserably failed. But this is the lesser argument against it. It would be usurpation and outrage. These rights that I have named, rights of person and of property, are not inalienable only, but awfully sacred; and somehow or other, sometime or other, the infringement of them is avenged. The Persians have a proverb, that when the orphan cries, the throne of the Almighty rocks from side to side. The Persians are Mohammedans, and perhaps they are too religious. It may be the theists are all mistaken. Possibly there is no throne to rock, and no Almighty Person anywhere above us. But in history I think I find an Almighty Something, whose Day of Judgment is always rising, and never sets; and I think I hear the sound of mills, whose grinding is exceeding fine.

But rights imply duties; and duties rights. Society, in absorbing the individual, becomes

responsible for his support; while the individual, in being absorbed, becomes entitled to support. This was the doctrine of Proudhon's famous Essay. Nature, he said, is bountiful. She has made ample provision for us all, if each could only get his part. Birth into the world entitles one to a living in it. This sounds both humane and logical. And it is logical. The right of society to absorb, implies the duty to support; while the duty of the individual to be absorbed, implies the right to be supported. But premise and conclusion are equally false. Society has no right to absorb the individual, and consequently is under no obligation to support him, so long as he is able to support himself; while the individual has no business to be absorbed, and no right to be supported. Experience has taught us to beware of the man who says that society owes him a living. The farmer has learned not to leave his cellar door open, when such theorists are about. Society has entered into no contract to support anybody who is able to support himself, any more than Providence has entered into such a contract.

Providence certainly is a party to no such contract; or there was a flagrant breach of contract in the Chinese famine lately; and there have been a great many such breaches of contract, first and last. I read in an old book, which some Communists have called Agrarian, that the God of the Hebrews used to hear the young ravens when they cried; but I do not read that no young raven ever starved.

Communism, as it has seemed to me, owes much of its present vitality and vigor to several widely prevalent popular hallucinations, pertaining to property in general, to money and capital in particular; hallucinations which must be carefully and patiently refuted.

Political economy has been taught and studied now, with some diligence, amongst English-speaking peoples especially, for several generations. It is more than a hundred years since Adam Smith published his "Wealth of Nations." And yet I will venture to say, that no science, claiming to be popular, is so poorly understood. Its very first principles,

and plainest lessons, are constantly contravened. Communism of course finds its opportunity in this stupid treatment of a science which no free people can afford to slight. Of all collateral studies, not one just now is of more immediate importance to theological students than this. The old Hebrew prophets, leaders of public opinion in their day and nation, were more than political economists, they were statesmen. The time, I will not say is coming, it has already come, when every publicly educated man in this nation should understand the laws of political economy, and be able to make them plain to the masses.

Prominent among the hallucinations referred to, is the one pertaining to money. What is money? Not this Five-Dollar Bill, which is worth absolutely just what the making of it cost, paper and printing, no more, no less. Here is a Paper Dollar, issued by Kossuth in 1852, in the name of the Republic of Hungary, that was to be. It cost me another Paper Dollar, redeemable in coin, which was a part of my contribution to the Hun-

garian cause. It cost the Republic that was to be just what the paper and the printing cost, was worth that then, and now is worth the value of the paper. And here is a Five-Dollar Bill, issued in Richmond in 1863, in the name of another Republic that was to be. It cost that Republic what the paper and the printing cost, was worth it then; but now is worth only what it might sell for as a souvenir. These bits of paper are not money, never were money, and never will be; they are only currency. Bank of England notes are not money. Money can not be printed. The only money for civilized peoples is coin of gold and of silver—the precious metals, as they are called. They come out of the ground by the sweat of human brows, represent human labor, and are accordingly of intrinsic worth. They are not only worth all they cost, but they have actually cost all they are worth. This idea of making money by printing or writing it, is absurd. Any farmer, any mechanic, any merchant, who entertains this idea, and acts upon it, unless he dies very soon, will live long enough to come to grief.

Any Parliament or Congress that tries to do it, commits either a folly or a fraud. The time for mincing matters has gone by. Plain words are best. Inflation of our currency is Communism. Somebody is cheated and plundered by it. Anybody who advocates it, calling himself a statesman, scornful of science, scornful of history, is either an ignoramus or a demagogue.

An exaggerated estimate of the amount of money in existence, is another popular hallucination that helps the Communists. Of silver, used largely in the Orient, the statistics are not quite so exactly ascertainable. But of gold, the Occidental standard of value, the total amount in existence has been computed at about eight billions, or eight thousand millions. Melted down and massed, it would make a block sixty feet long, thirty feet wide, and a trifle more than twelve and one-quarter feet high. Coined into Five-Dollar gold pieces (Half-Eagles or Sovereigns), and served out amongst us all of the human family, giving us each a Half-Eagle or Sovereign, there would

be only about enough to go round. And how long do you think it would last? Longer, of course, in Hong Kong, or Yokohama; but here in New York, it would last our theological students only about a week.

Land also is property. And what is land worth? As mere land, unimproved, much less than is commonly supposed. To get at the intrinsic value of land, you must go back to barbarism. Where a hundred civilized men now till the soil, imagine ten nomads, tending their flocks and herds; where ten nomads pitch their tents, imagine one savage, hunting and fishing. This is the ascertained ratio of civilization to nomadism, of nomadism to barbarism. Stop plowing now with your oxen, and what was worth a hundred dollars, will be worth only ten. Let your cattle all go wild again in the woods, and what was worth ten dollars, will be worth only one. I spend my summers by Narragansett Bay, in Massachusetts, on a farm near Mount Hope, where, a little more than 200 years ago, King Philip, chief of the

Wampanoags, fished and hunted. It is a farm of about eighty acres. Had we belonged to the Wampanoags—my family and I, with only wild land round our wigwam, we should have required at least eight thousand acres, to be as well off as we now are. And so it is, that landed property is largely human; ninety-nine one hundredths of it. Even these improvements, as they are called, which give land so nearly the whole of its rated value, would very soon be lost, and disappear entirely, should tillage cease. After all, and always, it is the farmer's foot, that both measures and makes the farm.

But the one hallucination which most of all, perhaps, inflames the discontent and cupidity of Communism, relates to capital. It is constantly talked of as if it were some mysterious power, out of sight like gravitation or electricity, but of tremendous potency, liable at any time to strike in avalanche or thunderbolt. What is it? Simply surplus: that which is saved and goes over of what the farmer raises; that which is saved and

goes over of the workman's wages. Any farmer may have capital, who will consume less than he raises. Any mechanic may have it, who will spend less than he earns. My dollar spent has to be earned over again; I am no better off than I was before, and must go back to the field or shop. My dollar saved gets me ready for the rainy day. And my dollar is as good as yours.

What may be called the chronology of capital, and the amount of it in existence, are also very wildly overrated. It is imagined to be a vast, almost inexhaustible fund, that has been a very long time in accumulating. Great wealth, especially of nations, is supposed to have begun a long way back, like a great oak, or the delta of some great river. The wealth of England, for example, is supposed to be the growth of centuries. But John Stuart Mill has asserted that a great part of it is only about twelve months old. And this can easily be proved. It is equally true of ourselves. Our principal crops are three: hay, grain, cotton. The hay is fed to our cattle; in a year, it is nearly all gone. The

grain is divided between our cattle and ourselves; in a year, that, too, is nearly all gone. The cotton lasts longer, but as cloth, not as crude cotton. Of our minerals, gold and silver of course are enduring, but the crop of them in our country is less than a quarter part as valuable as the hay crop. Iron lasts some time, but wears out after a while. Coal is consumed about as fast as we mine it. The products of the sea are more perishable still. Fish, unless salted, in less than a week would be good for nothing but to dress the land. These products of the land and sea make up a considerable part of what we call property. Very little of it is spontaneous. Most of it comes by toil. Human brain and muscle are in it. Proclaim now your jubilee of sloth; let all this industry instantly and absolutely cease; unyoke the oxen, call up the miners, shut down the mills, stop the vessels, stop the carts; and in twelve months' time what becomes of your property? Gone, a great part of it, like smoke into the sky.

What else have we for property? Roads, of course. Some bits of old Roman roads

have lasted well, though neither Italy, nor any other country, is much the better for them to-day. But our roads have to be mended every year, or they would soon become impassable. Railroads have to be mended almost every day.

Buildings are also property: Pyramids, Temples, Cathedrals, Churches, Warehouses, but especially the houses we live in. How much buildings are worth, depends upon how long they will last. To determine this, we must take the original cost of construction for a dividend, and for a divisor the percentage required to keep the buildings in good repair. Measured by this rule, the Pyramids are the best pieces of property in existence. If let alone, as they should have been, they would never have needed repairing. But of what use are they? Egyptian Temples rank next. But the Egyptian climate is exceptional. St. Peter's Church in Rome is said to have cost $48,000,000; but $30,000 have to be spent upon it every year to keep it in repair. Let it alone for fifty years, and what proportion of its original cost would any business

man be willing to bid for it? How long do our dwelling-houses last? Not so very much longer than the black tents of the Bedaween.

We have property also on the sea: vessels of wood and of iron. How long do they last? Where is the ship on whose deck Nelson was shot? Where is our own frigate, the *Constitution?* Where is the first steamboat that went up the Hudson?

The upshot of the matter is, that a great part of what we call our property comes and goes with the revolving seasons. Communists and children may dream of inexhaustible wealth locked up and guarded by hard and heartless men, who might unlock it if they would. So may poets sing of perennial fountains, like those which burst from the roots of Hermon to make the Jordan. But let Hermon miss the rains of a single winter, Hermon and the range to which it belongs, and soon there will be no more Jordan.

It remains to glance at what we have called the Gospel of Communism. The expression may have grated on your ears. The points

are mostly of contradiction, not of resemblance. Our Christian Gospel has in it the three elements of incarnation, atonement, and regeneration. The Gospel of Communism has no God in it at all, incarnate or any other. And it preaches neither atonement nor regeneration, for it recognizes no sin, only disease to be cured, or discord to be attuned. There is trouble enough in the world, but it all comes of inequality of social condition. Change that, and all will be changed. Equalize conditions, and there shall be "no more sea." Equalize conditions, and Paradise returns. Return it shall, says Communism, for Communism, like Christianity, is militant, only the weapons of its warfare *are* carnal. Equality of condition may be only preached as yet; by and by, when converts are multiplied, it shall be carried, as Mohammed carried Arabia, by force of arms. Enforced equality of social condition, that is the consummation; equality enforced, and re-enforced, from generation to generation.

Behold now the recovered Paradise. Nature is here, with all her laws, but with no

transparency of land, or sea, or sky. No light shines through. We have science, such as it is, the science of second causes. Poets and theologians are all dead. There is no God, nothing but unconscious force, which hears no prayers. "Like as a father pitieth his children," is part of an old Hebrew lullaby. We need no pity, only an equal chance. Humanity is sufficient unto itself; is Providence enough, and Grace enough. There are no families any more, not even a family, but only a flock or a herd. Human brotherhood is cant and nonsense, where no child calls any man father on earth, and there is no Father in Heaven. We are not brothers, only companions, oarsmen together in the galley, oxen together in the furrow. We have no favors to ask of anybody. All we need, and all we want, is wages for our work. As for work, organization of labor takes care of that, both to find it for us, and to keep us at it. In the Orient, children are seldom seen playing together, and women seldom smile. Here, too, when Communism triumphs, the air will have lost its oxygen. There will be no

more play. And there will be no more heroism. Moral character is of no account, so long as the work goes on. Genius is of no account, where the brightest must fare no better than the dullest. By and by, ambition is all gone. Competition is the name of a lost art. The arts are all lost. Coarser products deteriorate. Production declines. Everything declines. The alarm is sounded: We are going to ruin; we must all of us work more, and work better. Who shall make us work more and better? One another. And so our Paradise bristles with bayonets.

We had better be calling things by their right names. This is no Paradise of men, but of animals: of dull oxen first, each under his own end of the yoke by day, and each at night in his own stall, yokes and stalls all alike; presently, it will be of dogs, each growling and gnawing his well-picked bone; by and by it will be of wolves, howling and chasing down the belated teams; but at last it will be of tigers, tearing one another to pieces in the jungle. So the chapter, and

so the volume, ends, this tragic volume of human history: at the bottom of the final page, after a fashion of the old printers, *Memento mori*, with skull and cross-bones, though not of man, but of beast. The circle is now completed. The evolution ends. Beast thou art, and unto beast shalt thou return. Whether Law or Gospel, science said it; and so it is.

III.

ANTI-COMMUNISTIC SOCIALISM.

From the Communistic Socialism we turn to the Anti-Communistic, and at the same time merely Secular, Socialism, which will not detain us so long. The two have so much in common, that the separate points of interest, belonging exclusively to the latter, are comparatively few.

Nothing has occurred in Europe these many years of so much real moment to political science as what befell Paris and the French Republic in 1871.* Already the frightful horrors of the Commune are of less concern to history, than their acknowledged logical legitimacy, and what appears to have been their absolute conclusiveness. French Communism acted itself all out, pursuing

* Between March 18th, and May 27th, 1871.

every premise to its bitter conclusion. And whether France ever had common sense before or not, she has it now. French Communism fell in that duel, and was buried where the road forks, that Europe may think twice before choosing which way to go. It is carved now on the monument, what Communism is. It denies and violates sacred natural rights of the individual. It is despotism of the most searching and relentless character. As compared with any regal or imperial despotism, that France or any other nation ever saw, it is the bear that meets the man fleeing from the lion. Europe will think more than twice before going where the bear is. It is an immense gain to civilization, that France is now so nearly in her right mind, denouncing and deriding Communism as an exploded heresy, false to science, and fatal to every charm and charity of life.

But Socialism in France survives Communism; all the wiser for what has been forgotten, all the stronger for what has been endured. It makes a great difference that labor is now using its own lungs and its own lips,

stating and arguing its own case. The Workingmen's Congress, which met in Lyons on the 28th of January, 1878, and was in session, constantly debating the labor question, for twelve days, was attended by 140 delegates, nine of whom were women, and three of whom were peasants, representing most of the trades and districts of France. The speakers were not pestilent professional agitators, but all of them practical working men and women. The ablest man in the Congress, who would make his mark anywhere, doing credit to the training of the best schools, was Finance, a house-painter in Paris. Clear, incisive, rousing, he is evidently one of the born orators, whose felicities of utterance become the mottoes of banners and the watchwords of parties. The doings of that Congress, judging, as I have had to do, from a sketch and synopsis of them given by Frederic Harrison in the subsequent May number of the *Fortnightly Review*, are a study for the wisest of our political economists. Besides Finance, two other Parisian workingmen, Magnin and Laporte, were prominent; of

whom Mr. Harrison says: "It is my deliberate conviction that nothing in modern economic literature exceeds the truth, the originality, and the eloquence of these speeches by three Parisian workingmen." One is surprised, when he thinks of it, to see how the old Communistic leaders are forsaken. Fourier, Cabet, Louis Blanc are not even named; and Proudhon is only incidentally quoted. These men were before the Deluge. The oracle now is Comte. The problem no longer is, how to abolish inequality of social condition, which is accepted as inevitable, but how to lessen it, smooth its sharp edges, and get the virus out of it; dealing just now especially with the present exceptional distress of industry, but planning for a more stable and better future. One is curious to know what such men and women have to say, both in regard to what the matter is, and what shall be done about it. Finance charges the present distress, first, upon machinery, and, secondly, upon the caprices of fashion. Capital is not in the way; is not to be abolished, is not even to be regulated by the State. Individual

ownership of property is recognized as an advance upon communal. Property is sacred, as life and liberty are. The family also is sacred, guarded by the instincts of women, of whom it is finely said by Finance, that "their conscience is better than our science." The State is not to take matters in hand at all; there is no remedy to be found in laws. Public opinion is our only hope. We need no new legislation, only a new morality; something to stop this headlong rush for money. Theology is a melancholy failure, for it has nothing to say but to preach almsgiving to the rich, and resignation to the poor. In the final era, already dawning, labor shall take the place of war, science of theology, and humanity of God.

Such is the new French Socialism; in amazing contrast with that mad Communistic Socialism, which, only seven years ago, had to be shot down in the streets. I shall speak of it again in another connection. In this connection, I will simply call it a vain attempt to realize the Christian morality, without the Christian religion. It does not say

with Agrippa, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Very likely it does not know, even as well as Agrippa did, what Christianity is. And so, at last, it will have to say to its coveted morality, as the dying Brutus said to virtue, "I have pursued thee as a goddess, and find thee to be but a phantom."

Socialism in England is very decidedly English, home-born and homely; coming neither from abroad, nor from books. It has had very little to say for itself in the way of theory. The average English workingman would be far more likely to remind you, that "fine words butter no parsnips." The philosophy of the thing is left to Frenchmen and Germans. The only theory has been, that wages were too low, and that workingmen themselves must combine to push them up. And so the whole movement has resolved itself into a trial of strength and endurance between labor and capital. The struggle has been a very dogged one on both sides, altogether too rough sometimes, but gradually toning down,

and tending on the whole to good results. Not only have wages risen, but labor and capital respect each other much more, and treat each other much better, than they did.

The two main features of English Socialism are Trade-Unions and Strikes. The literature of the subject is already considerable. Besides Toulmin Smith's "English Guilds," with Brentano's Essay prefixed (1869), we may name, as specially noteworthy, the Comte de Paris' "Trades' Unions of England," edited by Thomas Hughes (1869); Brassey's "Work and Wages" (1872); Thornton's elaborate work "On Labour" (1869); Howell's "Conflicts of Capital and Labour" (1878); and several Papers of marked ability by Frederic Harrison and others, in the *Fortnightly Review*. When the balance-sheet comes to be made up, it will probably appear that the Trade-Unions have done much good, with some harm; while the Strikes have also done more good than harm, but with the good and the harm more nearly balanced. The orthodox an-

thropology, at all events, has apparently no revision to fear, since labor has proved that capital is supremely selfish, and capital has proved the same of labor. Each has had to look out for itself. No considerable number of capitalists have yet been found to pay higher wages than are demanded; and no considerable number of laborers have been found to take lower wages than are offered.

Trade-Unions are peculiarly at home in England. More immediately, they succeed the mediæval Craft-Guilds, which rendered such important service in developing the middle class in Europe. More remotely, their descent is traced from the Frith-Guilds, which originated in England in the time of Ina (688–725 A.D.), and which, in the ninth and tenth centuries, became general throughout Europe. Frith-Guilds mark, as it were, the infancy of civil society, when it crosses the line of kinship, and the family begins to merge itself in the State. Their design was to supplement the deficiencies of the State. Guild now means a corporation or society.

Originally, it meant both a feast and the company gathered to it; which suggests relationship to the ancient German gatherings, which were both banquets and assemblies of the people, at which all matters of public interest were considered and determined. These old Frith-Guilds, or Town-Guilds, as they might be called, were partly social, partly religious, and partly protective.*

Trade-Unions are neither social nor religious, but simply protective; not sodalities, but combinations. They have no use for fine phrases; they care only for the rights and interests of their members, which are the rights and interests of labor. They unite in themselves the advantages of Savings Banks and Mutual Assurance Companies. Each member pays, first, an admission fee, generally ranging from five to twenty shillings, according to the rank of the trade; and, after that, from twopence to a shilling a week, generally from three to four pence. Whoever has paid these dues, may be taken down with fever, without hearing the wolf at his door; or give

* Howell's "Conflicts of Capital and Labour," p. 4.

decent burial to one of his family, without running into debt to the undertaker. If factories stop, for whichever of the reasons, whether to keep down production, or to keep down wages, the workmen have joint capital of their own to fall back upon; not so very much, but enough for a good, stout fight either against hard times or hard masters.

Associations resembling the present Trade-Unions existed in England before 1562, but they were pretty much confined to the building trades. Trade-Unionism, as an important factor in the industrial life of the nation, has grown up out of the factory system. It began just before the opening of the present century, but its main development has been within the last twenty years. The change from handiwork to machinery was a revolution. Capital at once massed itself in few hands at a few great manufacturing centers. Labor also massed itself at the same centers. With production suddenly and immensely increased, violent fluctuations in market values, hardly possible under the old system, soon became frequent. Under these greatly

changed conditions of massed capital, massed labor, and increased production, even had the manufacturers been philanthropists, experimenting in political economy, a satisfactory adjustment of wages would have been very difficult. Wages paid in flush times could not, of course, be paid in hard times. But workmen never like to have their wages reduced. Neither would they like it any better, nor so well, to have the rate fixed permanently at some point between the highest and the lowest tide-water marks. When the tide was out, they would be no more than satisfied; and hopelessly discontented every time the tide was in. But manufacturers were not philanthropists experimenting in political economy; they were only average Englishmen of their class, trying to make money, and, like the men employed by them, trying to make all they could. The less they paid out in wages, the more they had left after selling their goods; the more they paid out in wages, the less they had left. Which now shall dictate to the other—labor to capital, or capital to labor? Of course, the

stronger to the weaker. And capital is now much stronger than labor; strengthened by the massing, which has weakened labor almost to helplessness. Goods need not be sold to-morrow, nor next day; but labor must find a market for itself or starve. Capital was tempted. And it must be confessed, that capital was hard on labor. But it was English labor, six hundred years after Runnymede; and again the right triumphed. English labor emancipated itself from the tyranny of English capital. Wages, that were too low, and would have remained so, are now as high, perhaps, as they can be without ruining trade. Many abuses have been reformed. Working hours have been reduced in most branches of industry, except in factories, and even there for women and children. Best of all, laborers in general are decidedly more intelligent and more moral. The Trade-Unions are Banks, and Assurance Companies, and Schools, and Debating Clubs, all in one. They are steadily educating their members in self-control, self-respect, and in the laws of trade; and they are steadily

weeding out the really objectionable features in their own organization and management. In 1871, after a most searching investigation of their affairs, they were legalized by Act of Parliament. Dullest and last of all, agricultural laborers formed a Trade-Union in 1872. So now the whole industry of the nation is thoroughly organized. Some 3,000 societies are in existence, enrolling at least a million and a quarter of workmen. Thus far they have had little or nothing to do with politics. They will make themselves felt in the government of the country by and by.

Strikes are not altogether modern. Indeed, few things are modern, except some of our mechanical inventions. A real strike occurred in England, causing great embarrassment and loss, at the time of the Black Death, in 1349; but was not known by this name, the word not being found either in Johnson's Dictionary, or in Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations." Strikes have been a part of the tactics of labor in its hard struggle with capital; and have been strongly condemned, even

by some of the best friends of the laboring classes. They are simply combined refusals to work for the wages that are offered. And if no personal violence is inflicted, or threatened, and no damage is done to property, the right of men in masses to refuse work, is just as clear as their right to do so individually, which nobody disputes. But the policy of strikes is another matter. The good they may do is certainly done at great cost, and with serious drawbacks. On a rising market for goods, strikes for an advance of wages usually succeed, manufacturers, it may be, having orders to fill, or, at all events, seeing a profit for themselves in spite of the advance. But on a declining market, strikes against a reduction of wages usually fail, manufacturers sometimes being more than willing to shut down their mills. Successful, or unsuccessful, they leave a sting behind, for they are warlike; and civilized nations have learned that arbitration is better than war. The Trade-Unions, wiser than workmen were twenty years ago, have greatly diminished

the frequency of strikes, and expect in no long time to prevent them altogether.

In our own country, the organization of labor is a long way behind what it is in England. Indeed, until very recently labor had almost nothing to complain of. Wages have been so high, that America has been called the Paradise of labor. Now, for the first time in our history, wages are sinking down towards, and, in some trades, have already reached the European level, perhaps have even gone below it. Hence great distress, and still greater outcry about distress, from one end of the country to the other. Congress did wisely at its last session in appointing the Labor Committee, of which Mr. Hewitt is the intelligent and able chairman, to inquire into the causes of this distress, and suggest remedies. And this Committee have done wisely in giving a hearing to all classes of theorists and malcontents. Most of them were Communists; and sensible people have to thank them for making Communism ridiculous.

Wiser men have followed. And whatever the Committee may conclude to say, the popular verdict, by an overwhelming majority, will probably be, that the present distress is due to causes, general and special, and calls for remedies, with which the Government, whether of any State, or of the whole Nation, has almost nothing at all to do. For example, the Government has no business to meddle with wages; nor to limit the hours of work, except for minors; and would do well to let even the rate of interest, like the price of corn or of any other commodity, take care of itself. One thing it might very properly do: it might establish, as Massachusetts has already done, a Labor Bureau, whose business it should be to collect and tabulate statistics of every sort pertaining to the industries of the country, adding those also of other countries, which would not only be of great service to individuals in search of remunerative employment, but might also lead to the opening of new channels of trade. Such information for the masses would be quite as legitimate a function of Government as the teaching of chil-

dren in the Common School. Anything more than this Government should be slow to undertake. Schemes of colonization, in the interest of agriculture, would not be wise. Desirable immigrants will make their own way into new territories. Protective tariffs, in the interest of manufactures, can be justified only as a temporary expedient in order to national independence, especially in case of war. Absolute free trade everywhere, it must, however, be considered, will inevitably bring labor to one level; a level to be determined by China more than by France, England, or the United States. Subsidies, in the interest of commerce, may help the infancy of great enterprises; but, in the long run, trade will do best to be let alone. Again, if patents are issued as a just reward, and proper stimulant, of invention, a limit should be set to prices put upon patented articles. Three or four times the actual cost of manufacture, is an extortion, against which the public has a right to be protected. One of the most vital questions of the day relates to Corporations. Some things, too large for individual enterprise, may undoubt-

edly be much better managed by Corporations than by Governments. But when a Railway Corporation can dictate its own charter, and is permitted to injure the property of individuals without indemnity, or is exempted from taxation, or can so "water" its stock as to put fortunes that were never earned into the pockets of a favored few, the time has come for indignant denunciation and radical reform, unless we prefer to wait awhile for a revolution. Corporation abuses are now simply monstrous, and have got to be stopped. Charles Francis Adams, Jr., has expressed the opinion, that "if any change had taken place in the power of the railroads over legislation within the past few years, he thought it had slightly diminished." Some sort of governmental supervision of railroads is certainly desirable, but may easily be carried too far. Governmental ownership is hardly to be thought of. And yet incorporated turnpikes, once very common and very serviceable, have now almost everywhere given place to public highways.

It all comes to this, that labor, by which in

this connection I mean muscular drudgery, must for the most part look out for itself. For the present this may well be done by Co-operative Associations of one kind and another, not unlike the Trade-Unions of England. The organization of a Labor Party in politics, I feel constrained to say, seems to me not the best thing to be done. The questions to be settled are questions of political economy, which ought, on every account, to be settled dispassionately. Men may vote as they please, but the laws of production and of trade are as inexorable as the laws of nature. Water will not run up hill; two and two do not make five; and greenbacks are not money. The fact is, our industries are out of normal proportion to one another. Manufactures and commerce have outrun agriculture. Farming towns have been losing their population. Factory villages and cities have been multiplying. We have manufactured more than we could find a market for; and have built more railways than were needed. We thought we were manufacturing and building only a little ahead of the demand; we have

learned, to our cost, and to our humiliation, that we were also ruinously ahead of dividends. There is only one road out of this trouble, between the high stone-walls of industry and economy. Such another inflation of our currency as seemed necessary during the Civil War, would now be like the relapse which sometimes follows a typhoid fever; the last state of the patient would be much worse than the first. The safety of universal suffrage will soon be tested as never before in our history. Should our demagogues succeed in committing an ignorant and headstrong majority to the financial heresies of late so current, we are in for another financial agony. Another such agony as we have just experienced might indeed provoke a very prompt reaction, and make this soft-money nonsense forevermore impossible. But a people of our boasted intelligence ought not to be fooled in this way. We can not afford to repeat the experiment. Once in a generation is enough. Jealousy of capital, organized and inaugurated as a permanent factor in our political life, would imperil first our whole

prosperity, and then our free institutions. Legislation unfriendly to capital would frighten it off to other countries, where it might hope for better treatment. Or if other countries join in the crusade against it, then it wastes everywhere rapidly away. Some German Socialistic writers, in discussing the sources of wealth, name only nature and labor, omitting capital, which Malthus and others, of the older and better school, have named as the third source. Capital, to be sure, is the product of past labor, but labor itself has not conserved it. If, as Theremin says, eloquence is a virtue, one is tempted to say the same of capital. It represents not intelligence only, but self-denial and self-control. Wages have been saved that might have been spent in show or luxury. Not many men are very rich, any more than many men have genius. And it requires even greater ability, and greater care of course, to keep a fortune than to make it. The idea of crowding incomes down to some prescribed maximum, is now, after all the experience of ages, an idea worthy of Bedlam. Labor with-

out capital, is to-day without yesterday. Capital is indispensable to labor in the production of any considerable amount of wealth. And then there are higher uses. Capital procures leisure; leisure promotes culture; culture multiplies wants; wants stimulate production. Labor all the while is taking lessons of capital, and multiplying its own wants, which are likewise to be supplied. And so the two help each other on. Higher wages, without higher tastes and wants, would be only a curse, and not a blessing. Capital is finer than labor, just as brain is finer than muscle. But there should be no schism. The duel now arranging between labor and capital, ought to become a debate. Labor is too well informed to be kept in the dark in regard to the dividends of capital; and may be trusted by and by, if not immediately, to demand for itself only what is just, for this reason, if for no other, that in the long run only the just is politic. A thoroughly good understanding between labor and capital is of equal importance to both of them.

If capital is foolish, it will madden labor into permanent insurrection. If labor is foolish, it will insist upon the submission of capital, and discover too late that its triumph is fatal to civilization and to itself.

IV.

CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM.

We come now to the Christian Socialism.

One might hesitate to put these two words together; partly, as risking offence to Christian people who associate nothing good with Socialism, partly, as risking the imputation of seeming to court the favor of Socialists who associate nothing good with Christianity. Strauss, in his "Life of Jesus," criticises the unlettered, childless peasant of Galilee for the narrow range of his teachings, which ignore, as Strauss alleges, science, art, the family, and the State. And the new French Socialism, as we have seen, waves its adieu to Christianity as a social failure, on the ground that almsgiving and resignation are its last words. If these are indeed its last words, then the time for adieus has come. Christianity may sail on, down the horizon, out of sight, out of mind, and we will wait till some

other ship, with a better device upon her streaming flag, comes ploughing through this black and bitter sea. But almsgiving and resignation are not the last words. There must be a real Christian Socialism; and there is. Dumb animals know who their friends are; so do children; so do plain men. The sympathies of the common people, as we call them, who have most need to better their condition, went over to the side of Christianity when it was first preached in one of the most severely governed provinces of the Roman Empire; and have remained on that side ever since. In many a struggle with Brahminism, Buddhism has carried the day as the more democratic religion. Christianity has had always the same advantage over every other religion with which it has ever measured its strength. Somehow, it has captured the hearts of men. If, just now, there be anywhere, in the older Christian countries, what looks like a popular revulsion from Christianity, it is not spontaneous and natural, but instigated, strange, and exceptional. When, either by the bigotry of its friends, or the

malice of its enemies, Christianity is narrowed down into mere religion, we shall find men preferring the good Samaritans.

Practical Christianity is both religion and philanthropy, love to God, and love to man; the former impossible without the latter. This problem of social inequality, now agitating the civilized world, is older than Christianity. Christianity has never been indifferent to it, and never can be. Better even than the miracle that followed, was this saying of our Lord: "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat. And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way." From this first and lowest of human wants to the highest, Christianity extends its care; but indulges in no sentimentality. First of all, it must know the facts. Like a wise physician, it undertakes to cure only the curable; and in every case prescribes for the disease, not for its symptoms.

Obviously, there is much inequality of so-

cial condition, which results from inequality of endowment. From genius like that of Francis Bacon, down to the dullness of a Yorkshire peasant, the distance is even greater than any difference there can be in food, raiment, or social environment. It is folly to commiserate the peasant, if only he has his human rights, and is comfortable. It would be absurd to offer him advantages he could not improve. And it would be wicked to inflame him with a discontent, which is simply rebellion against the Providential ordering of his lot. The system under which he lives, is, after all, much more elastic than it seems. Under the most oppressive institutions, of any age, it is astonishing how quickly condition responds to character and culture. Epictetus was born a slave; perhaps also Plautus. Christendom cares as much for Onesimus as it does for Philemon; possibly a little more. There is no mistaking where the stress is laid; not on endowment, but on the use made of it. In moral endowment we fare alike, as in the Parable of the Ten Pounds. In bodily and mental endowment

we differ, as in the Parable of the Talents. But in both it is use, and not quantity, that measures our real stature, and determines our destiny. Equality of social condition, with inequality of endowment, would be no kindness to anybody. If once established, it could not endure. Whoever properly respects himself, asks for nothing but a hearty recognition of his manhood, as Burns puts it in one of the finest of his poems. And Christianity looks out for that. Slavery has gone down before it over all the globe. Despotisms that could not be cured, have yet been softened by it. Republics, which Gervinus sees at the end of the historic course, are born of it. But it breeds no Catalines. You need not smite the vase in which an acorn is planted; the growing oak will shatter it. At bottom, it is an immorality to fight against this inequality of condition, which simply corresponds with inequality of endowment. Only what he has honestly gained by a fair use of his gifts and opportunities, should any man desire. And all that he has thus gained,

should every other man be willing, and more than willing, that he should have.

The aristocracy of eminent ability is not large, and never will be. How many Cromwells and Miltons may have died in their mothers' arms, nobody knows. But the grown-up Cromwells and Miltons have all been heard from. Mere culture is not creative. Very few men ever originate anything. The bulk of mankind are very common people, and always will be. Great bankers and merchants are as rare as great philosophers and poets. The possibilities of production are also limited. There never can be property enough in the world for everybody to be rich. The great mass of mankind, at best, will get only a little more than their daily bread for their daily labor. We brought nothing into the world, can carry nothing out, and, between these two poverties, behind and before, are instructed to be content with food and raiment. The present wealth of England is exceptional, being nearly five-fold what it was when she began her manufacturing career

seventy-five years ago, with more than twice as much now as then, were it equally divided, for every man, woman, and child in the kingdom. She will have to share that wealth with us, just as soon as we make her share with us the markets of the world. Then other nations will challenge both of us. And at last, when the whole globe comes to be densely peopled, like Belgium and Holland, and every people shall do its utmost to supply its own wants, the daily prayer for daily bread will be an honest and an urgent prayer from the rising to the setting sun. The resignation then preached and practised will not be cowardly submission to social wrong, but submission to Providence, to law, to nature.

We have to meet the question of graded compensation. How shall workmen be paid for what they do? By the day, or by the job? By the day, says Communism; and all alike, no matter what difference there may be with respect to skill, quickness, or diligence in any given kind of work, no matter what difference there may be with respect to the

kinds of work. Men are equal, and one man's time is no more precious than another's. Eight hours of the finest brain-work shall bring in no more than eight hours of the coarsest hand-work. This Communistic claim to indiscriminate wages is simply preposterous, and Christianity need not be asked for an opinion about it. But as between time-work and job-work, an opinion may well be asked for. While graded endowment grades work, and graded work grades wages, personality is always sacred, and is most secure when one is most absolutely master of his own time. It may not be wise, but I confess I look with some pity upon the day laborer, whose time is not his own, whether it be for ten hours, or only for eight, or six. I remember what is said of the "master's eye," and would rather not be the one to get more work out of men in this way than would be realized if the men were left to themselves. It is better all round that job-work be substituted for time-work whenever and wherever it can possibly be done. "Built by the day," recommends a house, to be sure. But careful

superintendence ought to be a sufficient protection against slighted work; and the fair thing is to pay, and be paid, for just what is actually done.

The question of women's wages, which has delicate and important moral relations, is easily settled on this basis of job-work. In time-work, muscle must determine wages, demanding more for men than for women. It is also urged, in justification of lower wages for women, that men have more responsibility than women for the support of others. But it frequently happens that one woman, an elder daughter perhaps, is the main stay of a whole household. This, however, is shifting the ground of a discrimination sometimes made, or maintained, for the basest of reasons. It were more just, and better every way, that the work actually done be paid for, no matter who does it, man or woman. In job-work physical inequality is of no account. Moral equality suggests equality of wages. This thing will have to be looked after by an advancing civilization.

The introduction of machinery necessitates

a new adjustment of wages. The man who rides the mowing machine all day should get more than the man who swings the scythe; and the weaver in a cotton mill should get more than the weaver at a hand loom; partly, because labor is a unit as well as capital, partly, because some machinery must be very skillfully, and all of it very carefully, used, but partly also because so much more grass is cut, and so much more cloth is made, and the advantage of machinery should not belong exclusively to capital.

Extra hard and hazardous labor calls for extra pay. The miner should get more than the wood-chopper, the engineer and fireman more than the sailor, because the risk to health and life is so much greater in the one case than in the other.

The just and proper minimum of wages for the humbler grades of labor, is another nice and important question. Political economy answers the question promptly enough. Labor, it is said, must be sold, as its products are sold, for what it will fetch. The laborer names his price, and the employer may give

it or not, as he pleases. Or the employer makes an offer, and the laborer accepts it or not, as he pleases. It is contract, and nothing more. Legally, the laborer can claim only the enforcement of the contract, which the employer also may claim. This all seems fair enough. But from the Christian standpoint, it may be anything but fair. I need not sell to-day the corn, or the hay, I have just harvested; but with my labor to sell, and nothing else, I must sell it to-day, or starve, or beg, or steal. And so capital has me at a prodigious disadvantage, compelling me to take less than I ask, less than I ought to have. Capital has no need to confer with capital, has no need to organize against labor; it is in itself already an organization from the start. Once in a while, as in the height of harvesting, with great crops and few to gather them, or, in a sudden freshet, with dams and embankments giving way, labor can name its own terms. But ordinarily the job will keep, and capital can wait till labor is hungry enough to accept what is offered. That this great advantage of capital has

been much abused, is beyond dispute. Labor has been oppressed by capital, crowded down towards the point of bare subsistence. Here Christianity steps in as the champion of labor, demanding that, in times of ordinary prosperity, workmen shall not, like oxen, get barely enough to keep them in good working condition. It is due the manhood of the humblest workman, that, with good economic and moral habits, he shall ordinarily have a margin to live upon, lying down at night with something in store for another day.

Christianity has a word also for the workman. Him, too, it admonishes to beware of the greed of gain; denounces violence and exorbitant demands; and lays it upon his conscience, when wages are lowest, if possible, to spend less than he earns.

As between employers and employed, brain and muscle, capital and labor, Political Economy sees only a selfish struggle, ending at best in a selfish compromise. Christianity proposes a hearty concord between the more favored few and the less favored many, whatever may be the ratio between them, whether

as one to two, or as one to four. The law is, "Let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." If this be impossible, then a permanent high civilization is impossible; for there can be no high civilization without freedom, and no freedom without the inequality of condition which corresponds with the recognized inequality of endowment.

Unavoidable inequality of condition comes also in part through sickness, accident, and premature bereavement, which frequently reduce whole families to want. A riper Christian civilization may probably be relied upon to lessen the absolute pauperism resulting from such casualties, by stimulating men to forethought and frugality. But this tax upon Christian charity will never wholly cease. And the entire problem of Christian charity needs to be thoroughly overhauled. Hospitals for poor sick people, it is now well known, are not so exclusively Christian as used to be supposed. Buddhists had them

some time before the Christian era. But the way they multiplied during the fourth century, when Christianity began to be felt as a new civilization, struck the heathen world with amazement. The Græco-Roman civilization had produced nothing of the kind; indeed, it had produced hardly a charitable institution of any kind. Poor Laws existed in Athens, but nowhere else in Greece, so far as we know. The distribution of corn in Rome, whether at half price, as by the law of the elder Gracchus, or gratuitously, as afterwards by the law of Clodius, was the work, not of philanthropists, but mostly of demagogues.* Christianity, beginning with the personal ministry of its Founder, has cared always for the poor. But great mistakes have been made. Impulse has had too much, and cool judgment has had too little, to do in the matter. Our Lord's economy is conspicuous in the great miracles of feeding. The thousands were marshalled with a sort of military precision, and the fragments were carefully gathered up

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* Woolsey's "Political Science," § 249.

With His followers, the waste and loss have been enormous, both in private and in public charities; so that one is tempted to think, and to say, that the good done in relieving want has been equalled, if not exceeded, by the evil done in fostering and perpetuating pauperism. The better the charity, the worse it has been abused, as, for example, in England. So now, after the experience of ages, how to deal wisely with pauperism is one of the most difficult questions in political science. It will certainly never do for us to forget, that what may be called the poverty of misfortune is small in amount compared with what may be called the poverty of fault. And certainly there ought to be some way of making a difference between the two. Neither will it do for us to forget, that there is a great risk in charity, at the best. The risk is that of enfeebling the will of the receiver. Absolute gratuities are hazardous, much more so than good people generally are aware of. Free beds in hospitals must continue to be furnished, as are free seats in churches, but low-priced beds, and low-priced seats, are better still.

Another cause of inequality of condition, partly curable, is commercial fluctuation. Commercial risks are greatest of all. Agriculture has its own risks from drought, flood, frost, noxious insects, and the like. Manufacturing has its risks, mainly from the freaks of fashion. The risks of commerce include all these, with others of its own. But the periodicity of commercial ups and downs, as of French Revolutions, with their cycles of twenty years, suggests the working of a law. It is the fever-heat of excessive speculation, sometimes caused by, sometimes causing, excessive production, which is followed by its ague chill. Everybody is wise in the event, and after it, for a while. But fever is in the air again, and the wisest mistake it for summer warmth; or, if not deceived themselves, have to suffer with others. One might expect some good from the lessons of history by and by, were not these lessons already so old and familiar. There is light enough to sail by, were it only at the right end of the ship; prow light, instead of stern light. The only chance of good is in moderating the greed of

gain. It is now a dreadful fever, holding its own till the frost comes, the sharp frost of adversity. Christianity undertakes to drive it out of the blood. Covetousness is challenged as idolatry, and the love of money is denounced as the root of all evil. If now there be anything in Christianity beyond its lessons, if it be a power, as well as a protest, we may hope for Christians enough by and by to make the commerce of the world more sane and sober.

But the chief cause of inequality of condition, wholly curable, is immorality of some sort, but especially in the use of intoxicating drinks. Most of the pauperism which we are taxed to support, and most of the crimes which we are taxed either to prevent or to punish, may be traced directly to this single source. Legislation on the subject has been stigmatized as sumptuary. It is no such thing. It is not the cost of the indulgence that is considered, nor the effect of it upon the individual, but the effect of it upon his family, who may be beggared by it, and

thrown upon the public for support. The thing sought to be restrained, is the immorality of injuring others. One way of doing this is by strict License Laws, rigidly enforced. The argument for such Laws is, that they respect the liberty of the individual, and leave room for moral suasion. The argument against them is, that they license an immorality. Another way of doing the same thing is by absolute prohibition. The argument for this is, that it is self-consistent and effectual. The argument against it is, that it infringes upon the liberty of the individual, attempts the impossible, and will only make matters worse in the end. The argument from experience in the case of the famous Maine Law, is not considered altogether conclusive. The great success of prohibitory legislation in the State where it originated twenty-seven years ago, is now generally admitted. Neither of the two great political parties dares to disturb the Law. Crime has sensibly diminished, and pauperism has been almost annihilated. But Maine is a border State, with a homogeneous population, most-

ly rural; and success there, it may be said, gives no assurance of success in States like Massachusetts and New York, whose exposure is greater, whose populations are more mixed, and whose cities are larger and more numerous. Either way, we have ascertained to a certainty the origin of nearly all our abject and stubborn pauperism, and Christian philanthropy sees clearly just what it is called upon to do.

There certainly remains no very considerable amount of social inequality fairly chargeable upon the selfishness of capital. Much that did exist has already yielded to the equally selfish pressure of labor; and more of it will have to yield to the same pressure. A wise Christian Socialism would rather see the struggle ended quickly by the manly concession to labor of all its rights.

In short, the social problem is complex. Inequality of condition is only in part avoidable, only in part deplorable. So much of it as corresponds with inequality of endowment, is no more than graded wages for graded

work. So much of it as results from casualties, is simply Providential. So much of it as follows commercial fever, must be expected as commercial chill. So much of it as has a vicious parentage, must endure the righteous retribution. And so much of it as Christianity can not approve, Christianity should intelligently, promptly, and indignantly rebuke. But there must be no wild dreams of an impossible abundance, gathered without care or toil. For mankind at large the surplus must always be small, and the margin narrow. To the end of time, if men would get on prosperously, they must learn just these two lessons of intelligent industry and strict economy.

Secular Socialism, whether Communistic or Anti-Communistic, mistakes the true relation of social condition to character. It assumes that equality of condition will ultimately bring about equality of character; and that the condition being good, the character will also be good. This is not according to human experience. Undoubtedly some poor men steal

because they are poor, who would not steal if they were not poor. But not all poor men steal. And some of the worst stealing in our day has been done by men who were far enough from being poor. The fact is, character determines condition far more than condition determines character. Aristotle saw this very clearly. Arguing against Communism, he says the evils complained of arise, none of them, from not having things in common, but from the moral badness of mankind.* This precisely is the assumption of Christianity. No religion was ever so intensely democratic. But it levels up. Nothing is ever levelled down but pride, egotism, haughty and hateful self-assertion. The incurable is declared and accepted. The curable is brought home to the consciousness, and to the conscience, of the individual. We learn to say, with Cassius:

> "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
> But in ourselves, that we are underlings."

The one persistent challenge of Christianity is, "Make the tree good." No matter how

* "Politica," B. ii. 5.

good the soil is: grapes will not come of thorns, nor figs of thistles.

But it will not do to say, no matter how *bad* the soil is. It does matter. Grapes may be very sour, and figs may be very bad. Good fruit requires good soil. In villages on the Lebanon, Christian houses are known by the glazed windows, which have taken the place of wooden shutters, that men and women may read their Bibles through the winter storms. It is a sure instinct which has thus bettered the condition of poor peasants. The same instinct demands a bettered condition for others as well as for ourselves. And he is a poor Christian who does not concern himself about the condition of others.

It is a monstrous heresy to suppose and say, that character being right, condition will take care of itself. You might just as well suppose and say, that religion being right, morality will take care of itself. Martin Luther hurt Protestantism when he called the Epistle of James "a veritable Straw-Epistle." Morality must be preached, or immorality will abound, in spite of justification by faith.

So must condition be cared for, if Christianity holds its own in these fast-coming days of challenge and conflict.

That Christianity *will* hold its own, I do not for a moment doubt. To be sure, it has never perfectly realized its Divine ideal. But always it has been the best thing in the world; and always it has conquered the world. In the Ancient Age, it was ascetic against licentiousness. In the Middle Age, it was autocratic against violence. In the Modern Age, it will be humane against selfishness.

Many there be who say that this our Christian civilization is mortal like every other, from the Chaldæan down; that this sacred river, too, is on its way to the Bitter Sea; is already shooting the rapids; Hermon, with its transfiguring glory, far behind; Galilee, with its Cana and its beatitudes, behind; Samaria behind, with its Joseph's tomb and its Jacob's well; the Judæan hills that are round about Jerusalem sinking one by one. Fear not. Declension is not apostasy; discipline is not destruction. It is the bitterness of the Sea, not the sweetness of the River, that is

doomed. Consider the vision of the Prophet. The little stream from under the threshold of the Sanctuary, rising to the ankles, to the knees, to the loins, becomes a river to swim in, and the waters of the Sea are healed.

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